

Willamette River Stakeholder Meeting Notes

Wednesday, Dec. 18

10:00-2:30pm

Trillium Farm Home, Old School Building

Introduction

Pam Wiley, MMT & Peter Kenagy, Willamette landowner & farmer

- * Meyer Memorial Trust was established in 1982 from endowment for charitable funding
- * Picked the Willamette River because of the significance to the majority of the Oregon populace
- * The Willamette Mainstem Cooperative (funded by MMT) began with landowner focus
- * Looking to put something into place that would be long-term and centered on native vegetation communities
- * It is a partnership project with many players
 - * We cannot accomplish much on our own, we must work together to improve and maintain the river for future generations.

QUESTION ONE

1. WHAT ARE 2 WAYS WE CAN USE INFORMATION FROM THIS ASSESSMENT (AND OTHER SOURCES) TO IMPROVE STEWARDSHIP OF VEGETATION RESOURCES ALONG THE WILLAMETTE RIVER?
 - a. IDENTIFY 3 GAPS IN KNOWLEDGE OR MISSING INFORMATION THAT ARE BARRIERS TO ACHIEVING IMPROVED STEWARDSHIP.

Question one – In what ways can we use information from this assessment (and other sources) to improve stewardship of vegetation resources along the Willamette River?

* **How to use the assessment**

* **Planning**

- * Use maps - ID and rank problem areas and priority species, define scope
- * Analyze to see if there is a pattern of distribution of high quality habitats correlated with topography, soils, etc.
- * Develop and get buy-in for benchmarks
- * Provide focus to efforts/determine priorities, set long-term goals – Education & outreach, control, etc.
- * Marry the assessment with other data
- * Create an action plan
- * Assessment divorced from side channels – need to look at entire system

* **Control**

- * Phenology and timing to address multiple species at once
- * Ivy as a common denominator weed – ag and ecology
- * Explore Integrated options

* **Solicit funding** – data strengthens grant proposals

- * Submit joint grant to work on weeds

* **Communication & Implementation**

- * Share info with landowners, get stakeholder buy-in, share resources
- * Communication with neighbors to coordinate control efforts
- * Coordination among groups
- * Communicate and learn the goals of ownerships first – and seek solutions for all landowners
- * Willingness of landowners to allow access – if property has invasives identified, what will happen to them?
- * Provide incentive for other parties to get involved
- * What is the best approach to education and outreach?
- * Ways to work across boundaries – risk liability
- * Avoid overwhelming landowners – occasional forums and look at big picture and distill
- * Follow-up survey
- * Lessons learned regarding landowner and group participation from other efforts
- * Promote business to customer information on invasives management (ex., weedspotters for businesses)

Question One

- Identify gaps in knowledge or missing information that are barriers to achieving improved stewardship.

* Gaps

* Outreach

- * How landowners can control invasive species (information, options, assistance)
- * Lack of access
- * Prevention of harm through use of appropriate control methods and timing

* Planning

- * System-wide management plan - How do you know where you are and where you want to be?
 - * What is the measure of success?

* Partners

- * Missing players (ODOT, utilities, railroad, recreationists, industrial, etc.)
- * Not understanding the goals and needs of various types of ownerships
- * Who is responsible for what?

* Communication

- * Bridge gaps between conservationists and landowners using case studies/success stories and local knowledge
- * Inadequate communication and transparency at the outset makes it difficult for the public to understand the issues and provide informed feedback.

* Funding

Question One- Identify gaps in knowledge or missing information that are barriers to achieving improved stewardship.

* Gaps (continued)

* Data

- * Need data portal to get information to land managers
- * Info on what invasives look like
- * Best management practices are not well established
- * Impacts of climate change on vegetation communities
- * What are expansion rates of weeds – will help in prioritization – need scientific data
- * Accuracy of surveys – some populations may be missed.
- * Location of priority fish species, e.g. OR chub
- * Locations of other priority native spp.
- * Cottonwood recruitment and populations
- * Goals in terms of patch extent, and composition of native habitats. Where is the biggest bang for the buck?
- * Common accessible repository for information (share w/ landowners)
- * How best to support landowner stewardship
- * Combine this assessment with other surveys on the mainstem (Harrisburg to Eugene)
- * Areas that we can shift to (mixed conifer – year-round shade – to shade out invasives like Himalayan blackberry)

QUESTION TWO

2. LIST 3 WAYS WE CAN COLLECTIVELY DETERMINE PRIORITIES FOR VEGETATION RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ALONG THE WILLAMETTE RIVER.
 - a. WHAT ARE 3 FACTORS THAT MAY PREVENT BUY-IN AND CONSENSUS FROM STAKEHOLDERS?
 - b. HOW DO WE ACHIEVE CONSENSUS AND BUY-IN ACROSS DIVERSE OWNERSHIPS, I.E., PUBLIC, PRIVATE, AND INDUSTRIAL?

Question Two – List the ways we can collectively determine priorities for vegetation resource management along the Willamette River.

Ways to determine priorities

* Data

- * Overlay with **Willamette slices framework** (<http://ise.uoregon.edu/slices/main.html>); use layers to determine hotspots
- * Leverage off other regional initiatives, such as the **Willamette River Initiative** (<http://willametteinitiative.org/>)
- * Building on existing information
- * **Case studies (lessons learned from all listed in red)**
 - * **Research**
 - * **Restoration efforts**
 - * **Landowner experiences**

* Partners

- * Bring key stakeholders to table work through Coordinated Weed Management Areas
- * Rotating chair/leadership role
- * Listen to private landowner needs

* Planning

- * Create short and long-term goals
- * Developing ecological framework for costs efficiencies – be open to all willing landowners

Question Two - List the ways we can collectively determine priorities for vegetation resource management along the Willamette River.

- * **Ways to determine priorities (cont.)**

- * **Planning**

- * Develop decision tree (criteria to evaluate projects)
- * Complete assessment on other Willamette mainstem reaches
- * Synthesize data and information on watershed scale
- * Consider priority sties to begin ground work.
- * Marketing campaign details (refine messages and create efficiencies – real issue is not lack of \$)
 - * Share our story and tailor the message to fit the targeted audiences.
- * Identify ecological aspects of issues (pros and cons to all groups)
- * Appeal to sense of community (we all live downstream)
- * “Ask an Expert” - (need an organized group of experts to respond quickly) – OSU, Oregon Invasive Species Council, Invasive Species Hotline, SOLV, etc.
- * Clear and effective messaging
- * Make use of groups with strong niches
- * Understand and communicate what you are trying to achieve
- * Create committees (Education & outreach, economic messaging, legislative outreach)

Question Two - What are some factors that may prevent buy-in and consensus from stakeholders?

* **Barriers**

- * Poor outreach
- * Lack of evidence for argument
- * Disagreement on goals and priorities – multiple layers of priorities depending on land use
- * Missing strategy to accomplish goals
- * Regulatory concerns (need to develop a sense of trust & cooperation)
- * Missing stakeholders

Question Two - How do we achieve consensus and buy-in across diverse ownerships, i.e., public, private, and industrial?

Consensus strategy (It's about PEOPLE!)

* Resources

- * Sufficient resources
- * Create list of all missing/present stakeholders along river reach

* Outreach

- * Media campaign on river ecology/invasives = sales – key messages – need a lead, request for proposal, etc.
- * Annual invasive species meetings focused on Willamette
- * Social hubs (churches, FSA, schools/scouts)
- * Tours (ID plants, etc.)
- * Change the culture
- * Utilize existing framework for outreach efforts
- * Identify tangible common interests (common ground)- address conflicting goals – identify overlapping values/interests
- * Connect the dots – identify ecological, economic and societal benefits
- * Incentives
- * One size doesn't fit all
- * Inform stakeholders of benefits – link to recreation quality, H2O quality, fish & wildlife
- * Focus on willing players and non-regulatory approaches
- * Address consequences of inaction
- * Develop personal relationships
- * Follow-up with survey participants
- * Identify ways to bring along non-participants (neighbor to neighbor)
- * Use different outreach for different partners
- * Give all stakeholders draft priorities and solicit feedback

QUESTION THREE

3. NAME 2 APPROACHES WE CAN USE TO COLLECTIVELY ADDRESS PRIORITIES ON THE WILLAMETTE RIVER.
 - a. WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BARRIERS TO COLLABORATING TO ADDRESS PRIORITIES?
 - b. WHAT ARE SOME OF THE OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP LONG-TERM CAPACITY TO ENSURE THESE PRIORITIES ARE ADDRESSED?

Question Three - Name approaches we can use to collectively address priorities on the Willamette River.

* Approaches & Opportunities

* Outreach

- * Share lessons learned up and down the Willamette – more education (interpretive signage)
- * Create venues to share information
 - * Float trips
 - * Directory of self-identified resources who can provide information
 - * Peer to peer networks
- * Well articulated legislative outreach
- * Engage agricultural and industry communities, cities and urban areas (be inclusive)
- * Get marketing people involved

* Planning and partnership

- * Use historical context
- * Utilize and share available resources, i.e. refer to experts
- * Clarify roles and niches (interjurisdictional agreements)
- * Define big picture
- * Team together to get, use, and share resources
- * Set flexible realistic goals that match all stakeholders
- * Credible scientific info
- * Consider regulatory authority
- * Restore public lands using model examples
- * Create a model for the river and share with all reaches
- * Hire a facilitator for the planning process

Question Three - What are some of the barriers to collaborating to address priorities?

* **Barriers**

- * Competition between organizations
- * Lack of resources; funding cycles not matched with landowner needs; resources not in right place to achieve restoration goals; competition for funding conflicts with collaboration
- * Access issues
- * Glamour of restoring sites overshadows less sexy maintenance projects – MAINTENANCE is important
- * Political and service boundaries
- * Having to say, “I can’t help you” to a landowner
- * Poor outreach, argument (proof)
- * Economics (long-term)
- * Disagreements on goals/priorities
- * Lack of recourse and/or checks and balances
- * Strategy to reach goal
- * Lack of science to develop priorities/determine ecological processes
- * Detachment of people to river
- * Not considering all stakeholder goals

Question Three - What are some of the opportunities to develop long-term capacity to ensure these priorities are addressed?

Opportunities

* **Funding**

- * Tax base – local push – encourages matching funding
 - * County weed control district levy
- * Communicate economic costs of inaction/benefits of mgt.
- * Tax incentives/credits
- * Submit grants as a stakeholder group – show funders in it for the long term
- * Track local changing priorities (Corvallis Sustainability)
- * User fees – whoever benefits should be contributing
- * Endowment
- * Willamette River watershed council?
- * Bite the elephant in pieces
 - * Two phases – establishment/planning phase and long-term operational phase

WILLAMETTE VEGETATION

- * At some point, do we need to address well-established invasives like blackberry?
- * EDRR!
 - * Early detection and rapid response for invasive species
- * We need to prevent introductions of invasives from upstream.
- * Do we understand the connection between healthy riparian habitat and a healthy river?
- * Invasives are preventing the establishment of natives.
- * Useful info – areas that can shift to mixed conifer for year-round shade competition
 - * 1850's GLS – patches of grand fir, perhaps geomorphically stable
- * It is distressing to see weeds choking out riparian habitat where large trees need to be.
 - * Importing trees for deposition into a river system is an expensive and labor intensive undertaking.
- * Assessment surveys show most weeds at habitat edges and areas of high disturbance

WILLAMETTE VEGETATION

- * Does water primrose (*Ludwigia* spp.) have any benefits? A water body would be more open without it, creating more habitat for aquatic species.
 - * Reduces dissolved O₂ in water
- * Riparian areas are important to fish – the single most important component of fish habitat in large rivers and side channels/floodplains is woody debris.
- * Significant differences were seen in vegetation near urban areas – more weeds, escaped ornamentals.
- * Invasive weeds are also affecting native mussel populations.
- * There are lots of studies nationwide looking at the effects of aquatic invasive species on other species/ecosystems.

Barriers

- * Lack of trust – fear of government interference
- * Cost
- * Competing economic interests
- * Turf
- * Be inclusive
- * Develop a sense of trust and cooperation (regulatory concerns)
- * Scale of problem

ACTION ITEMS

- * Group can access hyperlinks to studies on the effects of invasives on the ecosystem.
- * Benton SWCD will provide the stakeholder survey results by sector.
- * Next planning meeting in February with Willamette Mainstem Cooperative.

Upper Willamette Stewardship Project

Long Tom WC & McKenzie River Trust

- * Survey for 4 key invasive species on the Willamette mainstem from Eugene to Harrisburg
 - * Chosen based on variety of treatment methods and prolificacy of species
 - * Knotweed, ivy, clematis and purple loosestrife
- * 3 priority areas for survey and treatment focus
 - * Chosen based on interface between public and private landowners, large acreage parcels, and habitat present.
 - * Applied Willamette slices framework (<http://ise.uoregon.edu/slices/main.html>)
- * 19 landowners, all said yes

Invasive Weed Information

- * Dick Brainerd's presentation on Willamette River Invasive Plant Assessment
 - * <http://www.bentonswcd.org/assets/Willamette-Mainstem-Habitat-Assessment-Project-2013-small-v1.pdf>
- * Willamette Mainstem Final Report, abridged
 - * <http://www.bentonswcd.org/assets/Willamette-Mainstem-Assessment-Final-Report-Abridged.pdf>
- * PowerPoint for Ludwigia (water primrose)
 - * <http://plants.ifas.ufl.edu/manage/docs/researchreview/2013/NewLudwigia-ColetteJacono.pdf>
- * WSSA article on water primrose
 - * <http://wssa.net/2013/07/wssa-weed-watch-shape-shifting-primrose-plant-plagues-communities-in-coastal-states/>
- * Aquatic invasive species, Oregon Sea Grant
 - * <http://seagrant.oregonstate.edu/invasive-species>
- * Paper on ivy control in the PNW
 - * <http://www.invasive.org/gist/moredocs/hedhelo2.pdf>
- * False Brome Working Group article
 - * <http://appliedeco.org/invasive-species-resources/FBWG/brsybrochure.pdf>